

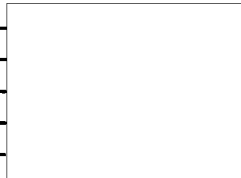
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Comparative Evaluation Descriptor Review  
Working Group Meeting

Minutes of Meeting of 6 May 1983

Attending:

DCI Representative  
DDA           "  
DDI           "  
DDS&T       "  
OP Representative  
and Review Coordinator



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1. Two major items were discussed at this meeting and those attending were in general agreement on the positions to be taken by the Working Group. The discussion centered on the broad subjects of potential and whether/how panels should evaluate clerical employees and those professional/technical employees below a certain grade level.

2. On the issue of potential the Group was asked about the characteristics panels believe important when attempting to determine an employee's potential, whether a need existed for developing additional guidelines to assist panels on this issue and whether panels sought to differentiate between potential for managerial and substantive responsibilities (Questions I A-D). There was mention of some characteristics panels view as important when discussing an individual's potential (performance, planning skills, attitudes, personality traits, etc.); the Group came to the conclusion that the way potential is determined appeared to be an issue that should not be centrally mandated. It was agreed that the current system seemed to be satisfactorily addressing potential at least in terms of how Career Services face the problem; consequently, the record should show that it is the Group's opinion that Career Services should be left to determine their own particular perspective on dealing with potential.

3. The question of the application of the evaluation system to clericals and professional/technical employees below journey level generated more detailed discussion (Question I K.). Most members were of the opinion that evaluating, ranking in numerical order (as some Career Services/Sub-groups do) and applying the descriptors to clerical employees appeared to be an unproductive system. The realities of the grade attraction mechanism (linking of secretary's grade to supervisor's grade), the Vacancy Notice system, the belief that results of past evaluations were rarely being referenced and the clerical employee's (especially senior secretaries) vague feelings about the

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system led most of the Group to conclude that a substitute system should be considered. This discussion produced the conclusion that panel evaluation of clerical employees be made optional for all grade levels (i.e., expand the recently established option for GS-06 and below clerical employees to all grade levels for clericals). It was stated that managers would thus be compelled to manage and to devote more attention to promotion, training and employee development issues. Another perceived benefit would less expenditure of time by panels on business that could largely be handled within the chain of command.

4. A substitute procedure was suggested which would have the supervisor/manager recommend for promotion and for those reassignments offering headroom for promotion. Recommendations would be based on PAR evaluations and personal observation of progress on the job. Questions of constraints such as time in grade, CSGA headroom, etc. would be reviewed by personnel and administrative staffs. Recommendations would be "approved" by the Office Director or Sub-group head. (Coordination across jurisdictional lines would be required for recommendation for employees serving in other than their home office.) Under this optional system there would be no formal evaluation for value to the service, ranking or application of descriptors. This option would allow for retention of a panel for more general issues such as trial period completion or performance and disciplinary problems but panel members would not be involved in an evaluation and promotion process.

5. The wisdom and necessity for utilizing the panel system for professional/technical employees below the journey level was the next item discussed. The notion of having the chain of command vice the panel recommend for promotion was viewed as particularly advantageous when dealing with employees of diverse backgrounds; it was thought that the branch/division chiefs responsible for managing people working within a certain discipline would be more knowledgeable about an individual's performance against standards than having one or more panel members who are not fully cognizant of the responsibilities of an employee sit in judgment of that individual. It was envisioned that the more junior level employees could be "evaluated" in a way similar to the alternate system proposed for clericals. The question of the possible loss of objectivity that a panel normally provides was raised. Although a concern, the consensus view was that supervisors/managers now often have the opportunity to recommend action to panels; under the alternate system they still would only be recommending (to the chain of command instead of the panel) and thus objectivity should be maintained. It was proposed that the Group continue to consider the recommendation of elimination of the mandatory imposition of panel evaluation for professional/technical employees GS-11 and below. Further, it was believed that having managers evaluate (with option to not use Descriptors) would fit well with the feeling expressed at our initial meeting that potential probably did not become an important issue until an employee reaches the GS-11/12 level.

6. The meeting was adjourned with the undersigned stating that we would continue discussing the points in the Questions, Issues and Observations paper at our next meeting and that the Agenda would pinpoint the specific items to be addressed.



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